

Kevin Diaz, Hot Dish Blog, *Star Tribune*

On a day when Minnesota's unemployment rate ticked upward to 7.1 percent, the state's U.S. House delegation split 4-4 on a proposed federal extension of unemployment benefits.

Three Minnesota Republicans - John Kline, Michele Bachmann and Erik Paulsen - were joined by Blue Dog Democrat Collin Peterson in voting against the measure, which failed 258-154 (it needed a two-thirds vote).

Four other Minnesota Democrats - Jim Oberstar, Tim Walz, Betty McCollum and Keith Ellison - voted yes in a procedural vote that would have advanced the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Continuation Act (H.R. 6419).

Altogether, 21 Republicans voted for the measure. Eleven Democrats, including Peterson, voted against.

In a preview of the coming debate over Bush-era tax breaks, proponents said that without the extension, 2 million jobless Americans will lose their benefits. Opponents cited fiscal concerns.

The vote came as Congress adjourned for a Thanksgiving recess.